

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2003

Governor George E. Pataki
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Pataki:

As host/Governor, we urge you to join us in immediately calling on the Republican National Committee (RNC) and Congressman Tom Delay to abandon plans to house conventioners aboard a foreign cruise ship during next summer's political convention. This morning's *New York Times*¹ reports that national Republicans are going forward with plans to house up to 2,200 conventioners aboard a foreign-owned, private cruise ship to be docked on the Westside during the convention. The RNC and Rep. Delay are moving forward with its plan despite objections from the Mayor and the President of the Hotel Association of New York.

According to the *Times* and other press reports², the RNC plans was to stow lobbyists and Republican elected officials aboard the Norwegian Dawn, a ship owned by Norwegian Cruise Lines that flies under the flag of the Bahamas. The use of a ship flying a foreign flag is particularly insulting to New York City's hotel and restaurant workers, given that it allows Norwegian Cruise Lines to avoid following U.S. labor, wage and tax laws.

Housing visitors on a foreign ship may also allow the conventioners to duck city hotel taxes, denying the city revenue and will cost the New York hospitality industry millions in income. It would be a direct blow to the same hotels and workers that faced layoffs as a direct result of the 9/11 attacks. The ship could undermine numerous convention-related businesses given that it features ten on-board restaurants, 14 bars and nightclubs and its own shopping galleria³.

It is our understanding that when the City negotiated its deal with the RNC, committing millions of dollars in City resources, it was with the intent that the City would benefit from the presence of all convention participants and that no discussion of a cruise ship was ever part of the original agreement. While the city will receive \$25 million for extra security during the convention, protection of a massive cruise ship is an additional expensive undertaking.

We urge you to ask the RNC to abandon the cruise ship idea, and if it refuses, we hope

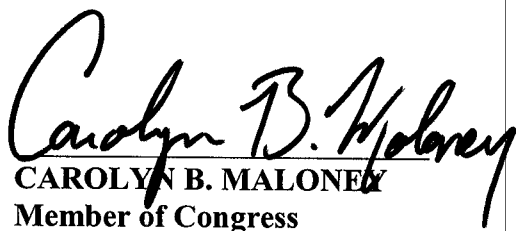
¹"The Republicans Are Coming, But Will They Venture Ashore?" *New York Times*, By Michael Slackman, Page 1, December 1, 2003.

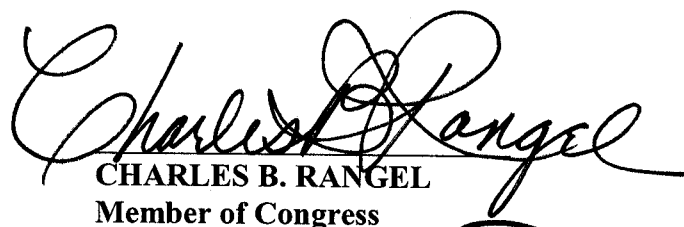
²"A Floating Convention?; GOP Eyes Cruise Ship for N.Y.C. Housing," *Roll Call*, By Ben Pershing and John Bresnahan, Page 1, November 10, 2003.

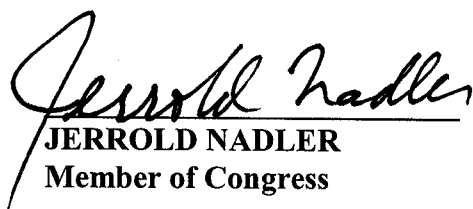
³<http://www.ncl.com/fleet/dawn/tour.htm>

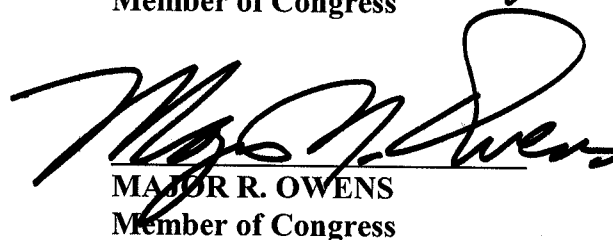
that you would take this issue to the President and ask him to intercede. As New Yorkers we are happy that the Republican National Convention is coming to our city, but we hope that the cruise ship proposal will not go through – the event will be clearly tarnished if Republican conventioners are not even willing to stay in the city for the convention.

Sincerely,

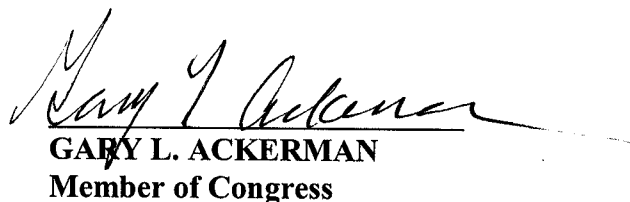

CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

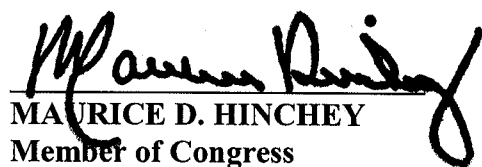

CHARLES B. RANGEL
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